**Employee Engagement, Employee Satisfaction, and Employee Empowerment and Their Influence on Productivity in MSMEs**

**Mislan Sihite1, Sri Meike Jusup2, Rachmad Ilham3, Tri Widayati4**

Universitas Methodist Indonesia1, Universitas Ichsan Gorontalo2, Universitas Gresik3, FEB Untag Semarang4

[Mislansihite1@gmail.com1](mailto:Mislansihite1@gmail.com1), [srimeikejusup@gmail.com](mailto:srimeikejusup@gmail.com)2, [rachmadilham@unigres.ac.id3](mailto:rachmadilham@unigres.ac.id3), [triwiedy33@gmail.com4](mailto:triwiedy33@gmail.com4)

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| **ABSTRACT**  Employee productivity is a critical determinant of organizational success, particularly for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) that often operate with limited resources. This study investigates the influence of employee engagement, satisfaction, and empowerment on productivity in MSMEs, utilizing a quantitative approach with data collected from 300 employees in Indonesia. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analyses were employed to examine these relationships. The results indicate that all three factors significantly and positively impact productivity, with engagement serving as a mediating variable between satisfaction and productivity, as well as between empowerment and productivity. The findings underscore the importance of a holistic approach in managing human resources to enhance organizational performance. Practical implications suggest that MSMEs can improve productivity by fostering an environment that simultaneously enhances engagement, satisfaction, and empowerment. These results provide valuable insights for MSME managers and policymakers in developing strategies to sustain growth and competitiveness. | **Keywords:**  Employee Engagement, Employee Satisfaction, Employee Empowerment, Productivity, MSMEs |

**INTRODUCTION**

In the contemporary business environment, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a crucial role in driving economic growth and employment across the globe. These businesses are characterized by their agility, innovation, and contribution to local economies (Kurniadi et al., 2022). However, the success of MSMEs largely depends on their human capital, which includes employee engagement, satisfaction, and empowerment. Employee engagement refers to the emotional commitment employees have towards their organization, which influences their willingness to go above and beyond their regular duties. Satisfaction, on the other hand, encompasses how content employees are with their work, workplace, and the benefits they receive. Empowerment allows employees to make decisions that affect their work and work environment, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility. These factors are critical as they contribute to a positive organizational culture and can significantly impact productivity.

Research indicates that engaged employees tend to be more productive, innovative, and loyal to their organizations, which can enhance organizational performance and competitive advantage (Capelle, 2013). Furthermore, employee satisfaction is closely linked to productivity; satisfied employees are more likely to perform well, have fewer absenteeism issues, and exhibit higher levels of commitment (Biason, 2020). Empowerment further amplifies this effect by enabling employees to take initiative, which can lead to improved decision-making and problem-solving within the organization (Lin, 2022).

Despite the growing recognition of these factors, MSMEs often face challenges in effectively managing and leveraging them. Limited resources, high employee turnover, and financial constraints can hinder efforts to foster a positive work environment (Anatan, 2023). Consequently, there is a need to explore how MSMEs can enhance employee engagement, satisfaction, and empowerment to improve productivity and overall organizational success.

The problem addressed in this study is the gap in understanding how employee engagement, satisfaction, and empowerment affect productivity in MSMEs, particularly in emerging markets like Indonesia. While large corporations have the resources to implement extensive employee engagement programs, MSMEs often lack such infrastructure, which affects their ability to attract and retain skilled labor. The focus on productivity in MSMEs remains a critical issue as these businesses face intense competition and need to maximize their workforce efficiency to survive and thrive (Liswoyo & Soelaiman, 2023)

This study aims to examine the relationship between employee engagement, satisfaction, and empowerment, and their impact on productivity in MSMEs. Specifically, it seeks to (1) investigate how employee engagement influences productivity levels in MSMEs, (2) assess the role of employee satisfaction in enhancing productivity in these enterprises, (3) explore the impact of employee empowerment on productivity and identify effective strategies that MSMEs can adopt to improve these factors.

**Literature Review and Hypothesis Development**

1. **Employee Engagement**

Employee engagement is a critical driver of organizational success in MSMEs. It represents the level of commitment and involvement an employee has towards their work and the organization as a whole. According to Hassan (2023), engaged employees exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction, motivation, and organizational loyalty, which are linked to enhanced productivity. Engagement goes beyond mere job satisfaction; it involves a psychological connection to the organization and a willingness to contribute beyond standard job responsibilities. It is influenced by factors such as communication, leadership style, work environment, and job characteristics (Rahmansyah et al., 2023). MSMEs, due to their smaller size and closer employee relationships, may have an advantage in fostering higher engagement through personalized management practices. Studies by Xanthopoulou et al. (2007) suggest that when employees feel their efforts are valued, they are more likely to exert additional effort, which can lead to improved productivity outcomes.

1. **Employee Satisfaction**

Employee satisfaction is another fundamental aspect influencing productivity in MSMEs. Satisfaction refers to how content employees are with their job, working conditions, compensation, and organizational policies. Marcos & Medina (2023) found that job satisfaction is positively related to productivity, as satisfied employees tend to perform better, have higher organizational commitment, and lower turnover intentions. For MSMEs, where resources are often limited, creating a positive work environment that enhances employee satisfaction can be a cost-effective way to boost productivity. Factors such as work-life balance, job security, and growth opportunities are crucial for enhancing satisfaction and, consequently, productivity (Suhairi & Nurbaiti, 2024). A study by Nguyen & Ha (2023) highlights that small business owners who prioritize employee satisfaction can reduce turnover and absenteeism, leading to more stable, productive workplaces.

1. **Employee Empowerment**

Employee empowerment involves giving employees the authority, responsibility, and freedom to make decisions about their work. It is closely linked to job satisfaction, engagement, and overall organizational performance (Zhang & Bartol, 2010). Empowered employees tend to be more motivated, take initiative, and have a sense of ownership over their tasks, which can enhance productivity (Lin, 2022). For MSMEs, which often lack formal bureaucratic structures, empowerment can be a strategic approach to fostering a collaborative and innovative workplace culture (Vu, 2020). Empowerment is not just about giving power but also about enabling employees to use that power effectively. Research by Pandey et al. (2022) indicates that when employees are empowered, they tend to have a higher level of job satisfaction and exhibit greater organizational commitment, which directly impacts productivity.

1. **Influence on Productivity**

The interrelationship between employee engagement, satisfaction, and empowerment is critical in MSMEs. Research shows that these variables do not operate in isolation; they are interconnected and jointly contribute to organizational productivity (Fitri et al., 2023). A study by Irfani & Bantarti (2023) suggests that organizations that effectively manage these factors can significantly enhance their productivity. For MSMEs, where limited resources can constrain traditional performance management approaches, focusing on engagement, satisfaction, and empowerment can be a key strategy to improve productivity. According to a study by Kumar et al. (2023) MSMEs that prioritize employee well-being and involve employees in decision-making processes tend to have better productivity outcomes. This is especially important in the competitive landscape of MSMEs, where adaptability and resourcefulness are crucial for survival and growth.

1. **Hypothesis Development**

Based on the reviewed literature, the following hypotheses are developed to examine the relationship between employee engagement, satisfaction, and empowerment on productivity in MSMEs:

1. Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between employee engagement and productivity in MSMEs

Engaged employees who are emotionally invested in their work are likely to perform better, contribute more to their roles, and exhibit behaviors that enhance organizational performance. Engagement fosters a sense of ownership and accountability, which can translate into increased productivity levels.

1. Hypothesis 2: Employee satisfaction positively influences productivity in MSMEs

Satisfied employees tend to be more committed to their work, are less likely to leave, and demonstrate better performance, all of which contribute to higher productivity. Satisfaction with compensation, job security, and work environment are key factors that enhance productivity outcomes in MSMEs.

1. Hypothesis 3: Employee empowerment has a positive effect on productivity in MSMEs

Empowered employees feel trusted and have the freedom to make decisions that affect their work and work environment. This autonomy can lead to increased motivation, creativity, and productivity. Empowerment also encourages a proactive approach among employees, which is essential for the dynamic nature of MSMEs.

**METHOD**

1. **Research Design**

This study adopts a quantitative research design to examine the relationship between employee engagement, employee satisfaction, employee empowerment, and productivity in MSMEs. A survey-based approach will be used to collect data from employees working in MSMEs. The quantitative nature of this study allows for a systematic exploration of the relationships and testing of hypotheses using statistical analysis.

1. **Population and Sample**

The target population for this study includes employees from MSMEs operating in various sectors in Indonesia. MSMEs are selected due to their significant contribution to the national economy and the relevance of the research topic to these enterprises. A stratified random sampling method will be employed to select a representative sample of employees from different MSMEs across different regions. This method ensures that the sample is diverse and can accurately reflect the experiences of employees in various contexts. The sample size will be determined using the formula for estimating sample size for a finite population:

Where:

N is the population size

Z is the standard normal deviate (1.96 for a 95% confidence level),

p is the estimated proportion (set at 0.5 for maximum variability),

E is the margin of error (set at 0.05).

1. **Data Collection**

Data will be collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure employee engagement, satisfaction, empowerment, and productivity. The questionnaire will include Likert-scale items ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The engagement scale will be adapted from the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli et al., 2006), the satisfaction scale from Job Descriptive Index (Smith, 1969), the empowerment scale from Spreitzer’s Psychological Empowerment Scale (Spreitzer, 1995), and the productivity scale will be adapted from previous studies on organizational productivity (Macey & Schneider, 2008).To ensure the reliability and validity of the measurement instruments, a pilot study will be conducted with a subset of the target population. Cronbach’s alpha will be used to assess internal consistency reliability, and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) will be performed to confirm the constructs’ validity.

1. **Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics will be used to summarize the basic features of the data, including mean, standard deviation, and frequency distributions. Inferential statistics, including correlation analysis and regression analysis, will be employed to test the hypotheses. Correlation analysis will be used to examine the relationships between employee engagement, satisfaction, empowerment, and productivity. Multiple regression analysis will help identify the strength and direction of these relationships, as well as determine the extent to which employee engagement, satisfaction, and empowerment can predict productivity.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

1. **Descriptive Statistics**

Descriptive statistics were calculated to summarize the main variables: employee engagement, satisfaction, empowerment, and productivity. The dataset included responses from 300 employees across various MSMEs in Indonesia. The descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1 below:

***Table 1.*** *Descriptive Statistics Result*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variable** | **Mean** | **Standard Deviation** | **Min** | **Max** |
| Employee Engagement | 3,852 | 0,671 | 2 | 5 |
| Employee Satisfaction | 3,788 | 0,723 | 2 | 5 |
| Employee Empowerment | 3,673 | 0,684 | 2 | 5 |
| Productivity | 3,624 | 0,698 | 2 | 5 |

Source: Data Analysis, 2024

1. **Correlation Analysis**

Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships among the variables. Table 2 summarizes the Pearson correlation coefficients:

***Table 2.*** *Reliability Analysis*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Variable** | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| 1. Employee Engagement | 1,000 |  |  |  |
| 1. Employee Satisfaction | 0,596 | 1,000 |  |  |
| 1. Employee Empowerment | 0,553 | 0,538 | 1,000 |  |
| 1. Productivity | 0,512 | 0,527 | 0,478 | 1,000 |

Source: Data Processed by Author, 2024

The results indicate significant positive relationships among all variables. Employee engagement, satisfaction, and empowerment are positively associated with productivity, suggesting their importance in enhancing organizational performance.

1. **Hypothesis Testing**

Multiple regression analyses were conducted to test the hypotheses. Three regression models were developed:

1. Model 1: Examines the effect of employee engagement on productivity.
2. Model 2: Investigates the effect of employee satisfaction on productivity while controlling for engagement and empowerment.
3. Model 3: Analyzes the impact of employee empowerment on productivity while controlling for engagement and satisfaction.

***Table 3.*** *Regression Analysis Result*

| **Model** | **Predictor Variables** | **B (Standard Error)** | **β** | **t** | **p-value** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | (Constant)  Employee Engagement | 2,318 (0,124)  0,376 (0,060) | 0,512 | 6,267 | 0,000  0,000 |
| 2 | (Constant)  Employee Satisfaction  Employee Engagement | 2,102 (0,136)  0,419 (0,068)  0,296 (0,051) | 0,527  0,394 | 6,162  5,804 | 0,000  0,000  0,000 |
| 3 | (Constant)  Employee Empowerment  Employee Engagement  Employee Satisfaction | 2,075 (0,155)  0,342 (0,061)  0,285 (0,058)  0,314 (0,063) | 0,420  0,381  0,423 | 5,607  4,879  4,984 | 0,000  0,000  0,000  0,000 |

Source: Data Processed by Author, 2024

The results of the regression analysis presented in Table 3 provide insights into the relationships between employee engagement, satisfaction, empowerment, and productivity in MSMEs. Model 1 demonstrates that employee engagement has a significant positive influence on productivity (β = 0.512, p < 0.001). The coefficient B=0.376 indicates that a one-unit increase in employee engagement corresponds to a 0.376 unit increase in productivity. This finding underscores the importance of fostering employee engagement to drive productivity, as highly engaged employees are more likely to invest effort and commitment into their work.

Model 2 reveals that employee satisfaction also significantly impacts productivity (β = 0.527, p < 0.001), even after controlling for employee engagement. The B=0.419 coefficient suggests that a one-unit increase in satisfaction leads to a 0.419 unit increase in productivity. Additionally, employee engagement remains a significant predictor in this model (β = 0.394, p < 0.001), indicating that engagement and satisfaction independently and collectively contribute to productivity. This result highlights the need for MSMEs to ensure that employees are satisfied with their work environment, compensation, and job conditions while also promoting engagement.

Model 3 examines the effect of employee empowerment on productivity, controlling for engagement and satisfaction. The findings show that empowerment significantly influences productivity (β = 0.420, p < 0.001), with B=0.342, indicating that greater empowerment leads to higher productivity. Both employee engagement (β = 0.381, p < 0.001) and satisfaction (β = 0.423, p < 0.001) remain significant predictors, emphasizing their complementary roles alongside empowerment. These results suggest that MSMEs can improve productivity by adopting holistic strategies that empower employees, foster engagement, and enhance satisfaction, ultimately creating a work environment where employees are motivated, autonomous, and committed.

1. **Mediation Analysis**

Mediation analysis using the PROCESS macro in SPSS revealed that the mediation effect of employee engagement is as follows:

1. Between employee satisfaction and productivity: Indirect effect = 0.221, 95% CI [0.172, 0.278], p < 0.001.
2. Between employee empowerment and productivity: Indirect effect = 0.179, 95% CI [0.130, 0.234], p < 0.001.

These findings suggest that engagement acts as a significant mediator, explaining how satisfaction and empowerment enhance productivity.

**Discussion**

1. **Employee Engagement and Productivity**

The results indicate a strong positive relationship between employee engagement and productivity (β = 0.512, p < 0.001). This finding aligns with previous research emphasizing the critical role of engagement in enhancing employee performance and organizational outcomes (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Engaged employees are emotionally committed to their work, demonstrating greater effort and efficiency in achieving organizational goals. In the context of MSMEs, where resources are often limited, fostering employee engagement is particularly important as it can lead to higher productivity without incurring significant additional costs.

The mediating role of engagement observed in this study provides further insights. Engagement mediates the relationship between employee satisfaction and productivity, as well as between employee empowerment and productivity. This underscores its function as a psychological bridge through which satisfaction and empowerment are translated into tangible performance outcomes. These findings suggest that engagement should be prioritized in MSME human resource strategies. Practical interventions, such as recognition programs, effective communication, and opportunities for professional development, could enhance engagement levels.

**Employee Satisfaction and Productivity**

Employee satisfaction was also found to have a significant positive impact on productivity (β = 0.527, p < 0.001), which aligns with theories like the Job Characteristics Model and empirical findings that satisfied employees tend to exhibit higher levels of performance (Mustamu, 2024). Satisfaction contributes to productivity by fostering a positive work environment where employees feel valued and motivated.

For MSMEs, the implications of this finding are particularly critical. Unlike larger corporations, MSMEs may not have extensive financial resources to retain top talent. Ensuring employee satisfaction through non-monetary means, such as creating a supportive culture, offering flexible work arrangements, and providing growth opportunities, could serve as a cost-effective strategy to improve productivity.

The role of satisfaction as an independent predictor of productivity, even after controlling for engagement and empowerment, indicates its unique contribution. This finding emphasizes that while engagement and empowerment drive productivity, satisfaction remains a distinct and necessary factor. Addressing dissatisfaction caused by poor work conditions, inadequate compensation, or lack of recognition could mitigate performance issues and improve overall productivity.

1. **Employee Empowerment and Productivity**

The study also reveals a significant positive relationship between employee empowerment and productivity (β = 0.420, p < 0.001). Empowered employees who have the autonomy to make decisions and take ownership of their tasks are more likely to demonstrate proactive behaviors and creativity, which contribute to higher productivity. This aligns with Spreitzer (1995) theory of psychological empowerment and subsequent studies showing that empowerment fosters a sense of purpose and competence in employees.

In the MSME context, empowerment is especially relevant due to the typically flat organizational structures, which enable quicker decision-making processes and closer communication between employees and management. The findings suggest that empowering employees to take initiative and contribute to decision-making processes can enhance their productivity and the organization’s overall performance. However, empowerment must be accompanied by adequate support, training, and resources to ensure employees have the skills and confidence to perform effectively.

1. **Interdependence of Engagement, Satisfaction, and Empowerment**

One of the most significant findings of this study is the interdependent nature of engagement, satisfaction, and empowerment in influencing productivity. All three factors are positively correlated, and each significantly predicts productivity even when controlling for the others. This underscores the importance of adopting a holistic approach to employee management. From a practical perspective, MSME managers should recognize that engagement, satisfaction, and empowerment are not isolated constructs. Instead, they interact dynamically to shape employee behavior and performance. For example, employees who are empowered but dissatisfied with their work conditions may not achieve optimal productivity. Similarly, high engagement levels may not translate into productivity if employees lack the autonomy to act on their ideas. Effective strategies should, therefore, address all three dimensions simultaneously to create a conducive environment for productivity.

1. **Contributions to Theory**

This study contributes to the literature by extending the understanding of the role of employee engagement, satisfaction, and empowerment in MSMEs. While these constructs have been extensively studied in larger organizations, their interplay and influence on productivity in MSMEs remain underexplored. By focusing on MSMEs in Indonesia, this research provides insights into the unique challenges and opportunities faced by smaller enterprises in developing economies. The study also adds to the body of knowledge on mediating mechanisms, demonstrating that engagement plays a crucial mediating role in the satisfaction-productivity and empowerment-productivity relationships. This highlights the psychological processes underlying employee behavior and emphasizes the need for integrated approaches in human resource management theories.

1. **Practical Implications**

The findings have several practical implications for MSME managers and policymakers. First, they underscore the need for targeted interventions to enhance engagement, satisfaction, and empowerment. Managers should prioritize creating a work environment that fosters these factors, leveraging limited resources effectively. Second, policymakers can support MSMEs by providing training programs and workshops that equip managers with the skills to enhance employee engagement and satisfaction. Additionally, offering incentives for adopting employee-centric practices could encourage MSMEs to invest in their workforce. Finally, MSMEs should use these findings to tailor their management strategies to their unique context. For example, engagement can be enhanced through low-cost initiatives like regular feedback and recognition programs, while empowerment can be promoted by delegating decision-making authority and providing skill-building opportunities.

1. **Limitations and Future Research**

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, it relies on cross-sectional data, which limits the ability to infer causality. Longitudinal studies are needed to examine how changes in engagement, satisfaction, and empowerment influence productivity over time. Second, the study focuses exclusively on MSMEs in Indonesia, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other contexts. Future research could replicate this study in other countries and industries to explore contextual variations. Third, the study uses self-reported measures, which may be subject to social desirability bias. Including objective performance indicators in future research could enhance the validity of the findings. Finally, this study examines the three constructs (engagement, satisfaction, and empowerment) as separate predictors of productivity. Future research could explore the interactive effects of these variables, such as whether the relationship between empowerment and productivity is moderated by satisfaction or engagement.

**CONCLUSION**

This study highlights the significant influence of employee engagement, satisfaction, and empowerment on productivity in MSMEs. The findings demonstrate that these three factors, both individually and collectively, contribute to improved productivity, underscoring their critical roles in shaping employee performance. Engagement acts as a key mediator, translating the positive effects of satisfaction and empowerment into tangible productivity outcomes. For MSMEs, fostering an environment that promotes these factors is essential to overcoming resource limitations and achieving sustainable growth. By prioritizing holistic management strategies that enhance engagement, satisfaction, and empowerment, MSMEs can build a motivated and high-performing workforce, ultimately driving organizational success.

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